

# LOADSTAR LETTER #72

## The Loadstar Tower Has Moved Across Town

By Jeff Jones. Fender and Judi have moved The Loadstar Tower to a nicer neighborhood, nearer to me and to their home.

Loadstar  
443 Gladstone Blvd  
Shreveport LA 71104

All email addresses will remain the same, but the new number for ordering and information is: 318-868-8727

## Fender Working On Dave Marquis' Greatest Hits CD.

By Jeff Jones. Using a C-64, a RAMLink and a MIDI interface, Fender is producing a studio quality CD of Dave Marquis' best themes. When you hear this CD, you won't believe that a C-64 is playing. The C-64 is controlling a Yamaha TG-33, in fact my own TG-33. This unit uses AWM synthesis like Yamaha's multi-thousand-dollar

keyboard, the SY-77.

Though I have always touted the fact that data is data no matter what computer it comes from, I must admit that I was overcome with an air of incredulity as I listened to the C-64 sounding like a symphony. Dave's orchestrations are so masterful that I've simply never heard my TG-33 sound so expensive. If you've enjoyed Dave's music in the past, you'll love it 65536 times better performed on a professional instrument with noiseless concert hall effects. This is one CD I will want to have on my shelf. The CD will be sold directly by Loadstar, and We'll post it on MP3.COM where we hope it makes everyone in the world say, "That's a C-64 playing?!?"

## How Stupid Is Your Congress?

By Jeff Jones. Well, like I said, whenever Congress acts on computers or the Internet, they show their ignorance. On August 3, Congress "protected us" by banning the sale of Liquor over the Internet. This angered an entire industry.

For me, a non-drinker, it's one of those things that make you go hmmm. I mean, I live two miles from a liquor store with a drive-through window. Let's see: a guy driving a 20-pound computer versus a guy driving a 3000-pound SUV. Which one should be able to buy liquor. If you were going to ban one or the other, seems to me the person in the death machine is a greater threat.

## New OLM Wars. AOL Goes Postal Over MSN Instant Mail

By Jeff Jones. Want to send an AOL buddy an Instant Message? Better be on AOL or you'll get knocked offline! This goes on despite partnerships with other ISPs for creating an instant message standard. When Microsoft created a way for its own members to send instant messages between each other as well as AOL users, AOL began disconnecting MSN users for using unauthorized software. They claim that they are not responsible for the actual disconnection of the user from MSN.

Remember OLMs? Online messages were the rage on Qlink, the Commodore precursor to AOL. 30,000 Commodore users were on Qlink in its heyday. You could be happily chatting or reading posts or doing any number of things online and suddenly a yellow line would appear on your screen as your Qlink software began downloading an online message from someone who just sent it to you. These messages could be annoying because they interrupted whatever you were doing until the message was both downloaded and dismissed. I've witnessed OLM bombs when ten or so people decided to constantly bombard one person (usually a jerk) with a barrage of OLMs until they logged off.

Nowadays, AOL is only for PCs and MACs and they call

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Shreveport LA 71104  
318-868-8727

## OLMs Instant Messages.

Regardless of name changes, 8-bitters have a bone to pick with AOL after the big drop of all 8-bit customers in 1991. There's nothing really special about instant messages. If you're online and they are online, you can chat — even if you're not in the same chat room.

AOL and MSN have been at gentlemanly war for a time. The latest AOL sortie logs Microsoft users off their own service and even disrupts any ongoing chat with other MSN Messenger users with the message:

*"You have been disconnected from the AOL Instant Message Service for accessing the AOL network using unauthorized software. You can download a FREE, fully featured, and authorized client, here..."*

AOL spokeswoman Tricia Primrose confirmed that AOL blocking activity is disconnecting MSN Messenger user who are chatting with AIM users. But AOL isn't responsible for any further effects, she said.

"We're just doing what we've always done, which is closing the connection to the AIM 'name space,'" Primrose said. "... We've been blocking, Microsoft has been doing workarounds. This problem that has emerged with people being logged out is not in any way connected to us disconnecting them."

## So, You Think You Should Buy A PC

By Jeff Jones. I won't forget the letter I once received from John Elliott, not the professor in Canada, but the ex-subscriber in California. In his letter he blasted me for putting down PCs for all

those years. He had just purchased one and he loved it. Let me make myself clear. I may upset some Commodore purists, but we should have an understanding here that we use Commodore computers because we enjoy them, because we want to for nostalgic reasons. Not because they are the "best" computers in the world. "Best" is too subjective. The C-64 I believe is the best computer to learn to program with, but not the best for photo manipulation or sound recording. There's no denying it. I rather like Windows 95 and Windows 98. I find them useful. When I received my Windows 95 computer from the UPS guy in 1996, it was the first time I had ever seen Windows 95, and I found it intuitive. Wasn't confused at all. With Macintoshes, I find that the makers of the system tried to be so "cute" that it confuses me. I'm very cautious and frustrated when I use Macs and PowerPCs. Simple things, such as formatting disks and even ejecting a disk, become full-blown Indiana Jones adventures of frustration.

As with Amigas, Macintoshes "own" disks. You can't eject them until the software is finished with it. Eject a disk and insert another and the Mac OS might ask for that disk 100 times until it's through polling it. Makes me freak.

It was Windows 3.1 that was a poor man's Macintosh. It just sits there on the screen with little help and, unless you angrily learned how to use it in the past, it remains Microsoft's first lame attempt at making a PC into a Mac, worthy of all the lumps and jokes it has taken.

With Windows 95 came a

concerted effort from Microsoft, hardware and software manufacturers to make computing what you'd expect. We Commodore people continue to put Windows down, and the conspiracy theorists think it's Bill Gates' attempt to take over the world — or at least the Internet.

If Windows 3.1 was a poor man's Mac, The Mac's Finder system is now a poor man's Windows 95. Now when I'm online, I see that the Mac has turned into the frustrated rich man's Windows 95/98 PC. Macs still cost more than PCs, but they do less because there's less available for them. As I pour through newsgroups, I see Mac people having all sorts of trouble with media files that any Windows person could play out of the box.

PCs are indeed getting cheaper and cheaper because of advancements in technology and the Internet. There's even a company (FreeMac.com) that claims it will give away one million iMacs — if you agree to buy a house through them. Other offers sell PCs for next to nothing if you agree to Internet services for a number of years. Frankly I hope this trend spreads. I'd like my local Video Express store on the corner to offer me a new VCR for \$25 if I agree to rent 100 videos and Playstation games in the next year — because I know I will.

But how do you make the transition from a 1982 1 MHz Commodore 64 to a 1999 500 MHz Windows Computer? It's not difficult. In fact Commodore emulators run very quickly on these newer computers. On my

*(Continued from page 2)*

modest Pentium MMX 200 MHz computer, Frodo runs at a reasonable rate — anywhere from 70-200% of a real Commodore's speed. Miha Perternel's C64S runs a maximum of about 800% on my system, with incredibly fast virtual disk access. New systems are faster than mine for more reasons than simple clock speed.

Why PC instead of Mac? Well, I have a long-standing disdain for the Mac because as late as those Independence Day "you better get the right computer to save the earth" commercials, Apple has pushed the notion that it's the computer, not the user or the software. I think that such notions corrupt the understanding of computers, which I see as polymorphic through software.

I use PCs t'boot, only after ruling out Apple. When I decided I would do photo editing, I opted for an Apple over the PC, being a true Commodore IBM hater. But as I scanned the catalogs, I quickly saw three clear computer facts:

#### **PC DISCOVERIES**

- There were two orders of magnitude more software available for the PC
- There were two orders of magnitude more hardware available for the PC
- \$10,000-\$20,000 accessories only appear in MAC catalogs.

So, voting with my wallet, I dropped my couple of thousand bucks into a PC system. Oddly enough, I immediately found myself able to make use of many of the Commodore items online. You know how people have

always complained about people placing Commodore items online in PC format. Well it's because I honestly believe there are more PC/Commodore people online than Commodore people. I have every LOADSTAR ever published at hand on my PC, and it's easier for me to send a D64 file (a PC image) to someone who asks for an issue than for me to send the files in Commodore format.

It's a PC world out there, but I do urge you not to plan on shelving your C-64 if you're planning on it. If you have room for two or three Commodore systems, You have room for a PC and a Commodore.

## **Bytes, Bits and Words Characters and ASCII**

By Jeff Jones. One of my coworkers, who is quite sharp, has a hard time relating to bits, bytes and words. I've explained it orally a few times, but it seems to have slipped past him. Perhaps I'm a better writer than an orator. This article is for Dana as well as everyone out there who isn't quite sure what a bit is.

We all know what a character is. If you imagine this article within a word processor, each character would be stored within a memory location called a byte. If your computer has one megabyte of memory, it has roughly one million bytes (1048576 bytes precisely) of storage. That means this article could have 1048576 characters in a one-megabyte computer. Naturally, you'd need a good chunk of those bytes for the program, variables, graphics, etc. But what's a bit, and if you already know that bits are smaller

than bytes, why did I explain the byte first? Well that's because first I wanted you to understand fully what a byte is — one character of memory. If you can imagine a byte as an eight-slotted egg carton, the eggs in the slots would be the bits. You see bits aren't really memory. Bits are electronic switches that make up a byte. When I say "switches," I really mean switch. These are circuits. Bits are real, physical electronic things that get turned on and off.

Some people say that since these switches have two positions, on and off, that this is the reason we call the number system used by computers "binary." This isn't the case. The binary system is called that because it uses powers of two, which we'll get into later.

When bits are on, we say they hold a 1 and when they are off, we say they hold a 0. Actually they just hold a few gazillion electrons.

If you can imagine playing a chord on a piano, the individual keys are the bits and the chord is the byte. Eight bits make up one byte. An egg carton full of eight eggs holds the number 255 and empty carton holds the number zero. There are 256 possible combinations of eggs in the carton and depending on how those eggs are arranged, your computer sees different numbers in different locations. This is how your computer sees every memory location. It doesn't see an image of a number the way we do.

Moment of Zen approaching: Understanding bits as parts of bytes, it's safe to say that bits physically exist and bytes are ethereal. Bits are physical switches that either hold a one or a zero — a charge or no charge.

Bytes are the notion of what those bits represent.

Put simply, each bit represents one number, 128, 64, 32, 16, 8, 4, 2, or 1. These are all powers of 2.

1 = 2<sup>0</sup>  
 2 = 2<sup>1</sup>  
 4 = 2<sup>2</sup>  
 8 = 2<sup>3</sup>  
 16 = 2<sup>4</sup>  
 32 = 2<sup>5</sup>  
 64 = 2<sup>6</sup>  
 128 = 2<sup>7</sup>

Every bit has its place. Bits that don't know their place are called "uppity bits." Just checking to see if you're paying attention. Any bit with a 1 in it has its power added to the resulting byte. I know it sounds complicated, but the computer accomplishes this quite naturally, just like you can look at the image of a number and instantly recognize it, something for which a computer needs a complex program and libraries. Not only that, you look at the number, 1468, and instantly know how much it adds up to. You do this in a way that's not so different than a computer. 1468 really means:

8 x 10<sup>0</sup>  
 +  
 6 x 10<sup>1</sup>  
 +  
 4 x 10<sup>2</sup>  
 +  
 1 x 10<sup>3</sup>

This is how our decimal system works. It's very similar to how the binary system works but it works with powers of ten instead of powers of two. If you will, the 1, 4, 6, and 8 are the "bits" of 1468. The number 1468

is the byte. It's just that in decimal we have ten-position switches instead of two-positions.

Let's take a look at how the number 65 looks to your computer:

128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

As you see above, there are only two eggs in this carton. Each bit above. An egg appeared under the 1 and under the 64. These add up to 65. Now let's take a look at a few more numbers before I go on.

255 looks like this:

128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

128+64+32+16+8+4+2+1=255

Now take a look at 254:

128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0

2+4+8+16+32+64+128=254

Note that the one bit is turned off. You might note here that this is true for all even numbers. The bit is on for all odd numbers.

15 looks like this:

1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0

And 16 looks like this:

1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

As you can probably piece together now, the value of the active bits are added to make the byte.

## What is ASCII Vs PetASCII?

By Jeff Jones. ASCII, pronounced "ASS KEY" stands for American Standard Code for Information Interchange (I think). Everybody uses it. PetASCII was Jack Tramail's attempt to be different. PetASCII and ASCII don't line up. So when you read an ASCII file on a Commodore, the case seems reversed. Because of this early goof-up, PetASCII is sometimes called JackASCII.

These are merely tables with a one to one correspondence. Space = 32. A=65. B=66 and so on. They really mean nothing to the computer though we have set up software to interpret numbers as ASCII when appropriate. For instance who knows what a Chinese or Russian computer thinks a 65 is.

Despite the fact that A almost universally is a 65, it's important to understand that computers simply can't store an A or a B or a space anywhere in memory. A computer can only store numbers between 0 and 255. That's it. Nothing else. This is in the same way that a computer can't store music or sound. It only stores numerical information that the proper program translates into the information we want.

So ASCII comes in as a software method of representing characters. As far as computer knows, there's no difference between a space and a 32. A file might have a 32 in a bitmap or a 32 in your music file. It's in your word processor file that the 32 is most likely a space. It still might not be a space because your word processor file might have pictures in it. Those pictures might have

32s in it. The header that lets the word processor know that the following glob of characters is really a picture and not text might have a 32 in it. The ASCII value for the "0" the character is 48, not zero.

It's your software which sorts all this out. You might think things would get messed up quite often, but it's rare unless you force the issue by fooling your software into accepting a file that it wasn't designed to handle.

Your computer's operating system (default, automatically loaded or built-in software) has tools that automatically handle the conversion of a 65 in a register into an "A" on your screen.

Again, your software knows. In the course of a computing session, your computer might ADD, SHIFT, ROL and otherwise encounter the number 65 in a memory location million times. Perhaps only 10,000 of those times it was an A that you typed or that you read.

## What Are Words?

By Jeff Jones. Well a word is two bytes which represent a number. You see 8 bits have only 256 possible combinations, and when you want to handle a number like 1024 or 61101, you need more bits. Words are two-bit numbers, representing any amount from 0 to 64435.

These words operate in much the same fashion as bytes except that 256 uses up twice as many bits as 255 because it spills over into another byte. Consequently programs (at least machine language programs) handle words slower than programs that handle bytes or "char" variables. This is why programmers often map out

the maximum range of variables and use appropriate variable types.

255 looks like this:

11111111

The word 256 looks like this:

00000001 00000000

And 257 looks like this:

00000001 00000001

65535, the highest number we can represent, looks like this:

11111111 11111111

Note that for purposes of this illustration, I have the bits going from highest to lowest now, as we do in decimal.

What you see above is what we call a high byte and a low byte. A quick way to a word can be figured from any HB/LB combination as follows:

$$\text{word} = \text{hb} * 256 + \text{lb}$$

The other side of this is:

$$\text{hb} = \text{int}(\text{word} / 256)$$

$$\text{lb} = \text{word} - \text{hb} * 256$$

But we can go ahead and figure out words the same way we do bytes and decimal numbers:

65535 is:

1111111111111111

$$1 \times 2^0 = 1$$

+

$$1 \times 2^1 = 2$$

+

$$1 \times 2^2 = 4$$

+

$$1 \times 2^3 = 8$$

+

$$1 \times 2^4 = 16$$

+

$$1 \times 2^5 = 32$$

+

$$1 \times 2^6 = 64$$

+

$$1 \times 2^7 = 128$$

+

$$1 \times 2^8 = 256$$

+

$$1 \times 2^9 = 512$$

+

$$1 \times 2^{10} = 1024$$

+

$$1 \times 2^{11} = 2048$$

+

$$1 \times 2^{12} = 4096$$

+

$$1 \times 2^{13} = 8192$$

+

$$1 \times 2^{14} = 16384$$

+

$$1 \times 2^{15} = 32768$$

In case you haven't noticed yet, we wouldn't need 32 bits in order to hold a number twice as large. We'd only need one more bit. Each additional bit doubles the number range just as each additional digit in a decimal number makes the number ten times larger — an order of magnitude for that number system.

## So What About ANDing and ORing?

By Jeff Jones. AND and OR are commands you might learn about on Conjunction Junction, but these functions are far different than the part of speech. ANDing and ORing is part of

binary addition. When you AND two bits, the sum bit is 1 only if both bits are 1.

So

0 and 0 = 0  
1 and 0 = 0  
0 and 1 = 0  
1 and 1 = 1

Believe it or not, I first learned this in sixth grade, some time in the 70s, before the computer age, when I began studying electronics. This was the only part of the book that I remember understanding.

When you OR bits, the sum bit is a 1 if either bit is 1

So

0 or 0 = 0  
0 or 1 = 1  
1 or 0 = 1  
1 or 1 = 1

When a programmer uses AND and OR, it's usually to turn on or off a specific bit. This is usually because of a register (a memory location that's actually an interface to a device) such as your video or sound device. These registers might be set up so that each bit controls a certain function or attribute when it's on or off. This saves memory and likely makes the hardware a bit faster. The sprite and vic registers operate this way among others.

Since you will want to access certain functions while ignoring others, you will want to preserve certain bits and Let's say a memory location currently holds a 254 and you want to turn off the 16 bit (bit 4). You could just subtract 16 from the number, but

that wouldn't always work. The way to turn off a bit is simple:

Byte = byte and (255-16)

In BASIC:

Poke mem, peek(mem) and (255-16)

You could place a 239 in place of the 255-16, but the point is, you don't have to know what you're dealing with here. You won't be doing it that often. But still, simplifying the code would make it faster. Skipping the AND altogether by manually figuring the number ahead of time, would generate the fastest code.

To turn on that same bit, we would use OR:

Byte = byte OR 16

In BASIC

Poke mem, peek(mem) OR 16

Again, if you want to optimize your code, you might prefigure setting like these, but it's only necessary if your code is slow and/or the ANDing and ORing might be done many thousands or millions of times.

## Make Your Own Cartridges with New Version Of Mcart Online

By Markus Brenner. I just uploaded a new version of mcart (V 0.33) to my Commodore Page at:

<http://arnold.c64.org/~minstrel/>

"mcart is a command line tool for generating C64 emulator cartridge

files (.CRT) from standard 8k or 16k cartridge ROM dumps. ROM dumps can either be in .PRG form (first two bytes are start address of ROM dump in low-high byte order) or plain data files (.ROM suffix)."

Version 0.33 fixes a bug with ULTIMAX files in ROM format. Game title strings are now converted to all-caps.

The \*.prg in question needs to be a ROM dump from an original cartridge or a file conforming to the requirements for a cartridge, which are laid down in the Programmer's Reference Manual. This is

a) data block from  
\$8000-\$9fff or  
\$8000-\$bfff with \$8000  
coldstart/warmstart  
vector, \$8004 CBM80 etc.

\_or\_

b) ultimax mode cart from \$e000-\$ffff (typical)

Or with other words: You can't just take any .prg from Arnold (say, fortapo.prg) and convert it to a CRT, you'd need the cartridge version of Fort Apocalypse (which doesn't exist :)

If you need any assistance with dumping carts, have a look at my tutorial at  
<http://arnold.c64.org/~minstrel/>  
and/or drop me a mail.

# Commodore Discussion Mailing Lists

From Wanderer. This is a list of all known Commodore mailing lists maintained on the Internet, sorted alphabetically by list name. The list is published at least once per month (preferably twice per month), with no set schedule. The latest copy is always available at <http://cbm.oc.dynip.com/ftp/text/cbm-mailing-lists-list.txt> and <ftp://videocam.net.au/cbm/info-txt/cbm-mailing-lists-list.txt> (normally within minutes of arriving at the server).

Readers are encouraged to upload this list to any Web Site and to notify me of any additions/changes/corrections or recommendations. If you would like to receive a copy of this list each time it is published, send a new email message to [wanderer@cyberdude.com](mailto:wanderer@cyberdude.com).

Snakeman's HTML version of this list can be found at <http://www.wipd.com/~snakeman/cbm-discussion.html> and will be updated shortly after this list is posted.

## 1541

Anything to do with Commodore computers  
Subscribe to...visit <http://www.onelist.com/>  
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## 4EmulatorsandRoms

Emulator and ROMS, for all platforms including Commodore  
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## c64

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Comments.....for people over 17

## C64Games

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Body.....not applicable  
Comments.....safe for kids

## CBMResources (CBM Resources)

Resources for Commodore 8-bit Computers  
Subscribe to...[listserv@oc.dynip.com](mailto:listserv@oc.dynip.com)  
Subject line...leave blank  
Body.....subscribe cbmresources

## COMMODORE

General discussion - one of the oldest/largest lists  
Subscribe to...[listserv@listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu)  
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## COPS (Commodore Only PostScript)

C= PostScript Printing  
Subscribe to...[cops-request@videocam.net.au](mailto:cops-request@videocam.net.au)  
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## Gamebase 64

Discussion about the front-end for certain

## emulators

Subscribe to...visit <http://www.geocities.com/~gamebase64/> for more information  
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## GTM (GEOS The Millenium)

GEOS Programming Discussions  
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## HVSC (High Voltage SID Collection)

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Body.....not applicable  
Comments.....for people over 17

## IDE64

The IDE64 Interface Discussion  
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## NovaTerm v9.6

Discussion List for Novaterm v9.6 Software  
Subscribe to...[novaterm-list@eskimo.com](mailto:novaterm-list@eskimo.com)  
Subject line...leave blank  
Body.....subscribe

## PADUA

Scene Related Mailing List  
Subscribe to...[c64-subscribe@padua.org](mailto:c64-subscribe@padua.org)  
Subject.....leave blank  
Body.....leave blank

## SCPU #2

Discussion list created during downtime of original list  
Subscribe to... [listserv@mail.jbrain.com](mailto:listserv@mail.jbrain.com)  
Subject ..... leave blank  
Body ..... subscribe scpu firstname lastname

## thebestgames

For mature gamers. Covers many platforms including the C64  
Subscribe to...visit <http://www.onelist.com/> to control subscription  
Subject line...not applicable  
Body.....not applicable  
Comments.....for people over 17

## TIFCU (The Internet for Commodore Users)

Telecomms Discussions and Info  
Subscribe to...[tifcu-request@videocam.net.au](mailto:tifcu-request@videocam.net.au)  
Subject line...subscribe  
Body.....subscribe

## Credits:

Daniel Morrow....[videoman@cdsnet.net](mailto:videoman@cdsnet.net)).....21 Jun 99  
Gaelyne Gasson...[gaelyne@videocam.net.au](mailto:gaelyne@videocam.net.au))..27 Jun 99  
Brendan Reid.....([bjreid@ihug.co.nz](mailto:bjreid@ihug.co.nz)).....28 Jun 99

| Oasis Commodore.....<http://come.to/oasiscomm> |  
| ACUG/VCS Archives.....<http://acug.oc.dynip.com> |  
| Commodore BASIC Ring.—..<http://come.to/cbring> |

## Comp.binaries. cbm's Moderator-in- Training, Markus Mehringer

By Cameron Kaiser. Because of the increasing Real Life load I'm working under, I'm unable to continue regularly moderating comp.binaries.cbm. Markus has some moderation experience already, and is also well-known in the Commodore community. (I didn't want a "ringer" since, although they might manage the group well, they would not really well understand the Commodore community these days.)

I have approved and injected all the posts in my queue as of this morning, and will give the keys to Markus. However, I'll continue to act in an advisory capacity, and backup-moderate as needed.

It's been my pleasure serving you!

## Credit Cards Over The Internet

Dear Rhonda & Jeff, This is a nice site. I subscribe to the Loadstar Letter & also Loadstar 64 & 128 disk. I have seen your ad in the last couple letters & finally had time to check it out. I think I would like to order your *You Can Be Free* disk, but I have not & do not plan on putting any credit card info into my computer. I realize that there are all sorts of safeguards, etc. & may be safer than over the phone, but I would prefer to send a check in the mail. Is there anyway to call or mail you to get the CD? Do you have any plans on selling the disks the old fashioned way. I like everything you both do for the Commodore.

Karen Stout

Jeff: Well you could send \$10.00 to:

Jeff Jones  
1625 Centenary BLVD #138  
Shreveport LA 71101

But your stance against using your credit card online is unwarranted. The people who propagated the whole "your-number-might-be-stolen-while-

**Nearly every time you slide your credit card or ATM card or gas card through a slot, you're making an Internet purchase.**

online" were probably the merchants who weren't online yet. You stand a much, much, much greater chance of having your credit card number stolen by a local clerk at your supermarket or gas station. Anyone who handles receipts after hours can get your number and sell it. It's easy to listen in on phone calls with a scanner and get numbers, whether you're on a cordless phone or not. The old fashioned low-tech way of doing it is to dig through your garbage looking for receipts and bills. I can get a telescopic microphone and listen in from my car. With a properly aimed dish, I can listen in to most any phone call in the nation. I can do all these things now after a trip to Radio Shack.

What can't I do?

I don't have the *slightest* idea of how to steal your credit card number during the millisecond it spends traveling encrypted or unencrypted on the Internet. One moment it's in the air. The next moment it's gone. Credit card

number over the net has to be one of the most over-hyped issues of the 90s. Anyone who can steal my credit card number over the Internet has my hat off to them.

Of course the people on the other end who process my order have the same chance of losing or misusing my number as Sears or mp3.com or Amazon.com. But that's not the Internet's fault. It's internal theft and corruption, which could happen anywhere. I suggest simply dealing with companies you trust with using credit cards. Fly-by-night companies may burn you, especially over the net, where an honest but rag-tag outfit or a dishonest outfit can put on a great face. Even when you deal with a reputable company, locally or over the Internet, you open yourself up to people who may use or sell your number.

Nearly every time you slide your credit card or ATM card or gas card through a slot, you're making an Internet purchase. Your local store is hooked up to your finance company through the Internet. Don't believe me? If you're ever lucky enough to watch a cashier log in, check out the LEDs for the card machine. For a moment it will say, "*waiting for ISP...*" For those who don't know, ISP means Internet Service Provider. So you've already made hundreds of Internet transactions without even knowing it.

So if you prefer to purchase my CDs online rather than sending me your check (with your bank account number on it), feel free to order online from mp3.com.

[http://www.mp3.com/artists/24/jeffrey\\_1\\_jones.html](http://www.mp3.com/artists/24/jeffrey_1_jones.html)

## RAMLink/ SuperCPU Help From comp.sys. cbm

I'm contemplating purchasing a SuperCPU 128 unit from CMD possibly in conjunction with a RAMLink unit... Could anyone give me stories of your real-life experiences with a similar setup? I'm specifically looking at it from a GEOS standpoint but would enjoy hearing all your stories and suggestions. Specifically:

- 1 Is it really worth the money?
- 2 How much RAM should I get with the RAMLink (if I should get the RAMLink at all, that is...)
- 3 Problems and incompatibilities
- 4 Compelling reasons why I simply MUST get one (or both)

Josh Payne

Answer 1: It's worth the money. Both are excellent upgrades for the Commodore. I can personally attest to the benefits of the SuperCPU. I have a SuperCPU on a 64C and a 128D. The SuperCPU makes GEOS fly. Having used a SuperCPU equipped Commodore with GEOS for so long, I had forgotten how much it improved GEOS until I configured GEOS to run on a non-SuperCPU C64. I couldn't believe how slow it was! If you use GEOS much, a SuperCPU is a very good investment. Not having a RAMLink (I could never personally justify the expense) I cannot comment much on it. I do believe it to be just as good an upgrade for the Commodore as the SuperCPU. I have a 4 megabyte Ram Card in my SuperCPU 128 and have it configured as a 4 Meg native mode RamDisk under Wheels 128. I don't have to worry about filling a 4 Meg RamDisk when using Wheels. As my 128D system is disk based (no RAMLink) I do practically all my GEOS work from the REU (RamDisk).

-- Charles Houck thechas@netins.net

Well I haven't got a SuperCPU 128, but I do have a SuperCPU 64, and I guess there isn't much difference.. If you want to continue to you use your C128 seriously, getting a SuperCPU is the way to go. The SuperCPU has an incredible potential, and only recently have projects been started to make use of this potential. Also, C64 programmers have had a history of exceeding its potential, and there's no reason we can't do the same with the

SuperCPU. As for GEOS, GEOS flies with a SuperCPU, but I think there's going to be some even better alternatives to GEOS in the near future.

If I were you I'd get SuperRAM... There may be next to nothing that supports it properly yet, but that's all going to change very soon. I just made a .wav player for my new SuperCPU OS, but I don't have any SuperRAM, so I can't play anything over 30k. I'd kill for some SuperRAM right now!

A lot of things work, but then a lot of things don't work. Most games that would benefit from running at 20-MHz (all 3d games) are getting fixed to work with SuperCPU.

I think issue 7 of GO64 is going to have a big SuperCPU section, I think that'll be worth checking out.

Another answer: I would recommend getting 'some' ram in the SuperCPU....in case some applications come along that can make use of it. Wheels can also make use of the RAM in the SuperCPU - as a ram disk, and for use by the Wheels system instead of an REU.

Get the RAMLink with RTC and as much RAM as you can afford...it's great to work with the Commodore without having to use tons of disks (as long as you copy your apps to the RAMLink).... And the RAMLINK is the only device the SuperCPU doesn't have to slow down to access...so you won't waste any time.

If you don't already have Geos 2.0, get it, and upgrade to Wheels since Wheels makes it so much easier to use all your devices on your system.

Many games work with the SuperCPU, many application programs work OK too... If you program in BASIC, C or other language on the commie, it speeds up your work tremendously.

I don't regret getting either the RAMLINK or SuperCPU... But if I had to say get one or the other, I would recommend the RAMLink.

-- Martin Fensome Richmond, BC  
Canada

The 65816 can directly address all 16-Mb. Unfortunately, there's next to no software that takes advantage of this. I believe Wheels can use this like an REU, but that's it.

I'd say to buy the SuperCPU without the RAM (or get a 0-Mb SuperRAM card) and invest the extra money in SIMMs for your RAMLink. BTW, you can get the RAM much cheaper on the open market (CMD's gotta make money somewhere).

## C-64 Sighting in Unsolicited Spam

I received this Email last week and laughed. Afterwards I felt quite old.

**Subject: Jesse Jackson takes two minutes to remember...**

Close your eyes.... And go back.....  
Before the internet or the MAC  
Before semi-automatics and crack  
Before chronic and indo  
Before Sega or Super Nintendo  
Way back.....  
To the Commodore 64, if you were rich...  
I'm talkin' bout hide and go seek at dusk  
Hot bread and butter  
The ice cream man (only after dinner)  
The water ice truck  
Doin' steps  
Red light, Green light  
Pretzel Day at school  
Recess  
Chocolate milk  
Lunch tickets  
The first time you got on the big swings  
Catch a girl - kiss a girl - OOOOOH!  
Penny candy in a brown paper bag  
Playin' Pacman in the corner store  
Hopscotch  
Butterscotch  
Double dutch  
A Chinese rope made from rubber bands  
Jacks  
Kick ball  
Stick ball  
Dodge ball y'all!  
Mother may I?  
Rainbow ice cream  
Chinese apples  
Candy apples  
Apple Jacks  
Hoola hoops and sunflower seeds  
10 packs of Kool-Aid for a dollar  
Jolly Ranchers  
Blow pops  
Ring pops  
What about grape and watermelon Now-  
Laters??  
The water plug (I can't get wet! All right  
well don't wet my hair...)  
The smell of the sun and lickin' salty  
lips.....  
Wait.....  
Watching Sat. morning cartoons  
Fat Albert  
Road Runner  
He-man  
Josie and the Pussy Cats  
The Three Stooges  
Catchin' lightning bugs in a jar  
Playin' tops or sling shot  
When around the corner seemed far  
away  
And goin' downtown seemed like goin'  
somewhere

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

Bedtimes  
Climbing trees  
Cornrows with beads and foil  
A million mosquito bites and sticky fingers  
Cops and robbers  
Cowboys and Indians (we didn't know the real story back then)  
When you wanted a Schwinn - but only had a Freespirit  
G. I. Joe with the Kung-Fu Grip  
The cabbage patch craze??!!  
Homemade skateboards  
Sittin' on the curb  
Jumpin' down the steps  
Jumpin' on the bed  
Pillow fights  
Being tickled to death  
Running 'til you were out of breath  
Laughing so hard your stomach really hurt  
Being tired-from playing  
Remember that?

**I ain't finished just yet.....**

Capn' Crunch and Fruit Loops came way befo' Apple Jacks!!  
What about going to the candy store (dill pickles with a peppermint stick, mmmm especially HOT pickles!! hot sausages, pigs feet...)

What about crowding in a circle around the "after school fight" and then running when the teacher came.....

What about the girl who had the big-bubbly handwriting??  
"Evil Kneivel" wind-up motorbikes  
"Hot Wheels" race car sets  
"Big Wheels"  
"Green Machines"  
Chemistry Sets (trying to make explosives and getting purple stuff)  
Radio Shack (tm) AM/FM radio kits  
Burning ants with a magnifying glass  
Graham Crackers & milk  
Picking wild blackberries  
Putting pennies on railroad tracks and watching them get smashed  
Skipping rocks on a lake  
Tackle football and grass stains

**Remember...**

Your moms made you pick out the switch that you was going to get whipped with  
You used to think that wrestling was real  
The kid who never wanted to play football with the fellas, but chose to jump rope with the

girls

If you acted up, your mother would whip you on the spot -- no matter where you were  
Those people who got Jheri Curls (tm)  
Momma driving past McDonald's every time  
"Toughskins"  
When you got a hole in your pants, you didn't get new ones-you got a patch that didn't match  
Your momma would cook turkey for Thanksgiving and stretch it out for 2 weeks until it was gone (well, not mine...)  
Eating Kool-Aid powder with sugar  
Jumping people's fences to pick apples, plums or grapes or...  
Somebody getting into a fight every year at the family reunion  
Having Family Reunions  
Throwing rocks at the neighbor's dog  
How moms burned up the toast, scraped off the black stuff, and said, "A little burnt toast is good for you"  
Asking your father for something after moms already said, "No!"

You can't forget... "I Ain't Gone Bump No Mo' With a Big Fat Woman"

"Double Dutch Bus Coming Down the Street"  
Solid Gold (Dionne Warwick, Marilyn McCoo and ARSENIO HALL)

Going to bed at 9pm  
DISLIKING the opposite sex  
Stretch Armstrong (for the brotha's)  
Lyte Brite (so as not to neglect the sista's)  
"Snoopy Come Home" (who all cried?) At the theater  
"Clap your hands everybody if you got what it takes, cuz I'm Kurtis Blow and I want you to know that these are the BREAKS..."

There's more, but I hey.....  
THIS FELT REAL GOOD JUST TO GO BACK IN TIME FOR 2 MINUTES AND SAY YEAHHHHHH, I REMEMBER THAT! WHAT EVER HAPPENED? SHARE THIS WITH A FRIEND OR MORE IMPORTANTLY, YOUR CHILD. There's nothing like the good old days....

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